

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6577

As Reported by House Committee On: Transportation

Title: An act relating to modifying the transportation system policy goals.

Brief Description: Modifying the transportation system policy goals.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Transportation (originally sponsored by Senators Kastama, Berkey, Swecker, Haugen, Kilmer and Shin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 2/26/10 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Adds the goal of "economic vitality" to the established policy goals for the state's transportation system.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 25 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Lias, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Rodne, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Campbell, Driscoll, Eddy, Ericksen, Finn, Herrera, Johnson, Klippert, Kristiansen, Moeller, Morris, Nealey, Rolfes, Sells, Shea, Simpson, Springer, Takko, Upthegrove and Wood.

Staff: Kathryn Leathers (786-7114).

Background:

Over the years, the Legislature has adopted numerous goals, objectives, and benchmarks applicable to the state's transportation system. Responding to a recommendation made by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation to adopt transportation benchmarks, the 2002 Legislature stated its intent that policy goals must be created for the operation, performance of, and investment in the state's transportation system. In 2005 the Legislature directed the Transportation Performance Audit Board (TPAB) to, among other things, study and make

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recommendations for modifying existing transportation goals and benchmarks, and to review the comprehensive 10-year investment program process and the corresponding statutory investment criteria. The resulting study recommendations included the recommendations that existing statutes, benchmarks, and other investment criteria be replaced by new legislation that establishes and aligns overarching goals for the state transportation system, and that the adopted goals should be those goals capable of being measured consistently from year to year. During the 2006 interim, the Joint Transportation Committee continued the work begun by the TPAB, by commissioning a report to make specific recommendations for aligning benchmarks and goals, and adjusting reporting requirements. The report included several recommendations, resulting in a variety of revised and streamlined transportation system goals, objectives, and responsibilities, and a process by which these elements are measured and reported on.

In 2007 the Legislature streamlined the state's policy goals for the investment in, and the planning, operation, and performance of the state's transportation system into the following five policy goals:

- *Preservation*: to maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services;
- *Safety*: to provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system;
- *Mobility*: to improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington;
- *Environment*: to enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment; and
- *Stewardship*: to continuously improve the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.

The Legislature also directed the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to establish objectives and performance measures for all state transportation agencies in order to assure that transportation system performance attains the five policy goals established in statute. The OFM was also required to submit to the Legislature and the Washington State Transportation Commission a baseline performance report on attainment of the newly established policy goals by December 1, 2007. Annual attainment reports are required to be submitted to the Legislature by October 1.

In addition, the Washington State Department of Transportation was directed to perform certain duties to support attainment of the newly established policy goals. Those new duties include: (1) maintaining an inventory of the condition of structures and corridors, as well as a list of structures and corridors in most urgent need of retrofit or rehabilitation; (2) developing long-term financing plans that sustainably support ongoing maintenance and preservation of the transportation infrastructure; (3) balancing system safety and convenience to accommodate all users of the system to safely, reliably, and efficiently provide mobility to people and goods; (4) for each project requiring an environmental impact statement, assessing life-cycle carbon emissions and alternative approaches for reducing carbon emissions; and (5) selecting engineers and architects to design environmentally sustainable, context sensitive transportation systems.

Summary of Bill:

The policy goal of "economic vitality" is added to the existing state transportation system policy goals. "Economic vitality" is defined as promoting and developing transportation systems that "stimulate, support, and enhance the movement of people and goods to ensure a prosperous economy."

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) You may be wondering why we don't already include "economic vitality" as a transportation goal. A Japanese newspaper recently discussed transportation in the Seattle area, due in part to their close ties to Boeing. They have an interest in making sure we have an efficient system and view our transportation system as an economic driver. This bill acknowledges the reality of that.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Kastama, prime sponsor; Amber Carter, Association of Washington Business; and Paul Parker, Washington State Transportation Commission.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.